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COMMISSION ON HUMAN RIGHTS

Forty-sixth session

SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 40th MEETING

Held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Monday, 26 February 1990, at 3 p.m.

Chairman: Mrs. QUISUMBING (Philippines)

later: Mr. DITCHEV (Bulgaria)

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The meeting was called to order at 3.15 p.m.

TRIBUTE TO THE MEMORY OF ALESSANDRO PERTINI, FORMER PRESIDENT OF THE ITALIAN REPUBLIC

1. On the proposal of the Chairman, the members of the Commission observed a minute of silence in tribute to the memory of Alessandro Pertini, former President of the Italian Republic.

2. Mr. MEZZALMA (Italy) thanked the Commission for the tribute which it had paid to the former President of the Italian Republic, a staunch defender of the noblest causes and, in particular, of human rights and democracy.

QUESTION OF THE VIOLATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS AND FUNDAMENTAL FREEDOMS IN ANY PART OF THE WORLD, WITH PARTICULAR REFERENCE TO COLONIAL AND OTHER DEPENDENT COUNTRIES AND TERRITORIES, INCLUDING:

(a) QUESTION OF HUMAN RIGHTS IN CYPRUS (agenda item 12) (continued) (E/CN.4/1990/5, 21, 22 and Corr.1 and Add.1, 25-28, 51, 52, 55, 57, 60-63, 69, 70, 73, 74, 76, 78, 80; E/CN.4/1990/NGO/1, 3, 9, 10, 15, 19, 23-27, 31, 32, 34, 35, 40, 47, 53-55, 58, 60, 62; A/44/526, 573, 620, 622, 635, 669 and 671)

3. Ms. NELLES (International Federation - Terre des hommes) drew attention to the disturbing situation of many inhabitants of the Philippines and, more particularly, the hundreds of thousands of displaced persons in the interior of the country whose survival depended on local and national assistance and assistance from international non-governmental organizations. The serious conflict between the Government and the insurgents, which had led to forced removals of peasant families, had been further aggravated by the frequent arbitrary and uncontrolled interventions of paramilitary groups. The situation of children, who were victims of all kinds of ill-treatment and lived in terror and privation, was particularly distressing. Those children, who were already physically weakened by endemic poverty, were rapidly dying of epidemics or lack of food in unhealthy locations where their parents had taken refuge or which had been assigned to them by the authorities or the army.

4. Many hesitated to return to their lands, rightly fearing that they would once again become victims of the local vigilante groups. The latter attacked not only the insurgents but also members of the grass-roots Christian communities and trade unions. Most peasant families had found that their houses had been ransacked or burned and their fields laid waste. The crops on which their survival depended had been completely destroyed and, in order to replant and hence to feed themselves, many had been obliged to borrow from money-lenders, thus aggravating their situation of extreme poverty. For lack of means, surviving children could no longer go to school; moreover, the school buildings had often been destroyed or were occupied by the military or by other refugees. Health care was non-existent. The poorest peasants had swollen the ranks of the beggars in the shantytowns of the large cities, where their children were driven to theft or prostitution in order to help the family to survive.

5. Forced removals affected all regions of the country and, in the first half of 1989 alone, at least 450,000 persons, 60 to 70 per cent of whom were children, had been victims of that practice. The situation of those

civilian victims was aggravated by the fact that the military and paramilitary authorities often stopped food, medicine or medical personnel from reaching assembly centres or distant villages. Many children were dying of malnutrition and disease, and adults survived hardly any better. Such a situation represented a flagrant violation of the basic right to life and of many other rights enshrined in the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights, in particular its articles 10 and 11.

6. Likewise, the free exercise of the humanitarian duties of the members of the medical and paramedical corps was jeopardized because health professionals were frequently subjected to pressure through threats, harassed and even assassinated, if they attempted to succour the victims. Philippine and international medical teams could testify to the fact that the most elementary community health programmes had often been dismantled and eliminated, leaving those most in need of them without care.

7. The International Federation - Terre des hommes had heard the Minister for Foreign Affairs of the Republic of the Philippines reaffirm in the Commission his Government's commitment to human rights and, while it welcomed the abolition of the death penalty in the new Constitution, it could only note that a large number of persons, children in particular, continued to die because they had been deprived of their fundamental rights. The all-out war on poverty which the Philippine Government had declared risked becoming even more difficult to win while it was constantly thwarted by the unacceptable practices of the military authorities.

8. Moreover, a Philippine citizen coming to testify before the United Nations risked harassment as a consequence, as had been the case of the President of a children's foundation whose home had been ransacked during her absence and whose security had only been guaranteed through high-level contacts.

9. The International Federation - Terre des hommes recommended that the Philippine Government should be strongly urged to take immediate measures to ensure that humanitarian aid reached the entire displaced population without hindrance and to ensure the security of all human rights workers and organizations that were helping the refugees; to give priority attention to children and mothers in the areas of conflict and assembly; to put a final end to the cruel activities of the many paramilitary groups which were currently acting with complete impunity; and to take action which would lead to a peaceful settlement of the conflict.

10. The Federation wished to express its concern regarding the future of Cambodia. No one could be unaware of the genocide to which the population of that country had been subjected in the past. Nevertheless, it continued to be sorely tried by the recrudescence of armed conflicts and exactions by non-governmental factions. The Federation welcomed any initiative which could be taken under the auspices of the United Nations to find a peaceful and durable solution which would guarantee to the Cambodian people the enjoyment of all their rights. Some progress could be noted, such as the abolition of the death penalty, the improvement of judicial procedures and the legalization of the Buddhist religion, for example, but it was always very difficult to establish whether, in practice, citizens really enjoyed all their rights.

11. The Federation accordingly recommended that the Commission on Human Rights should invite all interested Governments to cease arms deliveries to

the parties to the conflict, to provide for effective machinery for the protection of human rights in the process of political settlement and to declare the seat of Cambodia in the United Nations vacant while awaiting the desired political settlement.

12. Mr. TABORGA (Chilean Commission on Human Rights) recalled that, during the 16 years of the military dictatorship in Chile, a period characterized by constant political persecution which had claimed hundreds of thousands of victims, the international community had been commendably consistent in condemning the grave violations of human rights in that country and had endeavoured to find solutions. General Pinochet had continued to violate the international treaties on human rights systematically and to flout the recommendations of the United Nations. The progress which had been achieved recently and the co-operation finally given to the Special Rapporteur - and later withdrawn - did not exonerate the military Government from its historic responsibility.

13. Thanks to the recent electoral triumph of the democratic forces, representing the culmination of the population's untiring efforts, the power of General Pinochet was coming to an end. The international community should therefore condemn one last time a régime which had been and continued to be contrary to the democratic tradition of Chile and which had continued to the end to exercise violent repression. Pinochet had raised additional obstacles by promulgating a large number of laws designed to deprive the new Government of the means it needed to function effectively. Still more serious, he had instituted a constitutional system which enabled him to monitor the civil power personally, thus seriously limiting the powers of the future President of the Republic. The authorities had nevertheless pledged that they would overcome the difficulties which they were bound to encounter, and respect human rights strictly. The Chilean Commission on Human Rights had no doubt that the authorities had the necessary democratic will and moral, legal and political credibility to realize that pledge.

14. For all those reasons, the Chilean Commission on Human Rights endorsed the declaration of the new Government that there was no need for its future action to remain under review by the Special Rapporteur, since it had undertaken to make the Chilean State a full participant in the international human rights monitoring system of the United Nations and to permit the continued investigation of known cases and action on cases which might come to light as a result of subsequent investigations. It was therefore important that the draft resolution to be adopted by the Commission at its forty-sixth session should request the new Chilean Government to ensure the full restoration of the democratic legal order in accordance with international treaties and to guarantee the exercise of their constitutional prerogatives by the public authorities in a State based on the rule of law and sovereignty of the people; to normalize the administration of justice and to review the iniquitous judgements rendered by the emergency military courts; to institute judicial and administrative inquiries with a view to punishing those responsible for violations of human rights; to ensure proper compensation for the victims of repression, for exiles and for persons who had been dismissed from office for political reasons; and to devote appropriate attention to the country's serious economic and social problems and to improving the lot of the indigenous population. All those concerns had been neglected by the military Government.

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15. On behalf of the Chilean people, the Chilean Commission on Human Rights wished to thank the United Nations, its agencies and its Secretariat, which had made it possible to monitor the human rights situation in Chile, and to pay a special tribute to the Ad hoc Working Group and the successive Special Rapporteurs who had conscientiously discharged their mandate. The non-governmental organizations had also played a not insignificant role. Above all, the Chilean Commission on Human Rights wished to express its gratitude to the peoples and Governments of the democratic countries of the world which had concerned themselves with the situation in Chile for the entire period of the dictatorship. It also paid tribute to the activities of Mexico, Sweden and the countries of the European Economic Community, including Spain, France, Italy and the Netherlands, Cuba and Algeria among the socialist countries, and Australia, Canada and many others without which it would not have been possible to create conditions conducive to freedom and democracy.

16. Mrs. BALAN-SYCIT (World Student Christian Federation), speaking on behalf of various non-governmental organizations - the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, the International Association against Torture, the Habitat International Coalition, the International Commission of Health Professionals for Health and Human Rights, the International Federation of Rural Adult Catholic Movements, the International Federation - Terre des hommes, the Latin American Federation of Associations of Relatives of Disappeared Detainees, Liberation, the Women's International League for Peace and Freedom, the International League for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples, Pax Romana, the Regional Council on Human Rights in Asia, and the International Union of Students - again expressed her concern over the deteriorating human rights situation in the Philippines. The Federation, however, appreciated the various steps taken by the Philippine Government to try and improve the situation. In that connection, note must be taken of the introduction of provisions regarding human rights into the 1987 Constitution, the adoption of numerous laws and the establishment of State agencies such as the Commission on Human Rights and the Presidential Committee on Human Rights. Nevertheless, the effectiveness of those initiatives continued to be jeopardized by actions and policies that ran counter to human rights, such as the "total war" launched by the Government which had resulted in repeated massacres of civilians while those responsible were not always punished, as demonstrated by the acquittals handed down by a military court in connection with the Lupao massacre.

17. A number of groups for the defence of human rights in the Philippines and abroad, as well as the 18 members of the Human Rights Committee, had therefore strongly urged the repeal of Presidential Decree 1850 under which the military courts were competent to deal with human rights violations committed by members of the army and the police. It was very surprising that the President of the Philippines should have vetoed the bill adopted by Congress for the repeal of that decree.

18. Owing to the policy of total war and the related campaign of counter-insurgency, the struggle against the root causes of poverty had become of secondary importance. Scarce resources had been allocated to the creation of paramilitary groups called the Citizen's Armed Force Geographical Units which were similar to the vigilante groups that the President of the Philippines had ordered disbanded. The operations of such groups led to gross and systematic violations of human rights: almost 1 million people had been forced to evacuate their homes since 1986 and more than 14,000 had been arrested, most

of them without a warrant, while disappearances, summary executions and torture had been reported by the Working Group on Enforced or Involuntary Disappearances, the Special Rapporteur on Summary and Arbitrary Executions and the Special Rapporteur on Torture. The number of victims of the total war continued to grow, and not a day went by without the human rights organizations learning of new assassinations or disappearances in all regions of the country.

19. Another very disturbing phenomenon must be mentioned: the military had adopted the practice of publishing in national newspapers huge financial rewards for information leading to the capture of certain individuals. Thus, the name of the former Executive Director of the Citizens' Disaster and Rehabilitation Centre, who was currently serving as co-ordinator of a Swiss aid programme, had one day appeared in the newspapers assailed by serious accusations. Thanks were due to the Permanent Representative of the Philippines to the United Nations Office at Geneva for her prompt action in a matter which must nevertheless be denounced as an example of the violation of the right to be presumed innocent and to due process.

20. The Federation felt bound to mention the case of the persecution to which the United Church of Christ of the Philippines (UCCP) had been subjected when it had been accused of being a Communist organization. Members of the Church, who were well-known for their activities on behalf of the poor and the oppressed, had been arrested and assassinated by paramilitary and vigilante groups. The climate was so difficult that, when an investigation was opened, as had happened in one case in which the Under-Secretary-General for National Defence, Mr. Quisumbing, had intervened, witnesses did not dare to testify.

21. While realizing the great difficulties faced by the Philippine Government, the Federation considered that, by failing to prosecute notorious human rights violators of the Marcos régime and by failing to address the popular demand for justice, the Government was contributing to its own destabilization. The Federation believed that, by firmly pursuing the ends of justice, by meeting the basic needs of the people and by attacking the socio-economic structures of oppression and exploitation which were the root causes of the rebellion, the Government would rally the support which it needed.

22. The Federation called on the Philippine Government to act decisively by prosecuting and punishing those guilty of human rights violations, to abandon its total war policy and to hold talks with all opposition groups without pre-conditions. Finally, it respectfully urged the Commission on Human Rights to renew the mandates of the various Special Rapporteurs and working groups and to find effective ways of dealing with deterioration of the human rights situation in member States with democratically elected Governments.

23. Mr. PARADA (International Union of Students) deplored the repression of students and other members of the academic community in most regions of the world.

24. In China, students calling for democratic reforms had been massacred in Beijing in June 1989 and others, described by the authorities as "anti-revolutionary elements", continued to be persecuted and imprisoned. In Tibet, students had been arrested and sentenced to unknown periods of re-education through labour for their "reactionary" and "pro-independence" activities.

25. In South Korea, the headquarters of the National Council of Students had been closed; one student had been murdered and a female student had been tortured and sentenced to 15 years' imprisonment.

26. In Myanmar, students were persecuted and the human rights situation had deteriorated. Under the martial law decrees, which strengthened the authority of the military to conduct summary trials, 22 persons, including students, had been sentenced to death.

27. In Nepal, schools had been closed for an indefinite period, hundreds of students remained in prison and all student activities had been banned. Following the nation-wide pro-democracy demonstrations in February 1990, more than 5,000 demonstrators and students had been arrested and at least 20 persons had been killed.

28. In the occupied West Bank and Gaza Strip, where schools remained closed, almost 500,000 Palestinian students had been deprived of their natural right to education. Young Palestinians were the main targets of Israeli repressive measures, including killing, torture, detention and deportation. Referring to the case of two young Lebanese still held by Israel, he called for more effective measures to be taken to put an end to the illegal occupation of southern Lebanon by Israel.

29. Harassment, detention and gaoling of students continued under the apartheid régime in South Africa, where an anti-apartheid activist and lecturer at the Wits University had been brutally assassinated in May 1989. In addition, five students who were members of the Namibian National Student Organization, and had called for the withdrawal of South African troops from schools in 1988, had been sentenced to different imprisonment terms in Walvis Bay in November 1989. In that connection, he drew the Commission's attention to Security Council resolution 432 (1978) regarding reintegration of Walvis Bay into the territory of Namibia.

30. Despite the changes which had taken place in Chile, many students remained in prison. He therefore called upon the Commission to extend the mandate of the Special Rapporteur for a further year.

31. In countries such as Kenya, the Sudan, Egypt, Honduras and Guatemala, students had been abducted, tortured and killed by the authorities. In many others, such as Liberia, Nigeria, Zaire, Malawi, Somalia, Iraq, Oman, Bahrain, Saudi Arabia, Iran, Turkey and Egypt, students were forbidden to conduct their activities freely or to form unions.

32. The International Union of Students called upon the Commission to take all possible measures within its competence to encourage the Governments concerned to observe the basic rights of their students and academics and to refrain from conducting any form of atrocities against them.

33. He went on to address the Commission on behalf of his own organization and of the following 21 non-governmental organizations: Habitat International Coalition, the International Commission of Jurists, the International Commission of Health Professionals for Health and Human Rights, the World Confederation of Labour, the Greek Orthodox Archdiocesan Council of North and South America, the World University Service, the International Abolitionist Federation, the World Student Christian Federation, Prison Fellowship

International, Human Rights Advocates, the International Federation for the Protection of the Rights of Ethnic, Religious, Linguistic and Other Minorities, the International Human Rights Law Group, Liberal International, Liberation, the International League for Human Rights, the International League for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples, the Minority Rights Group, the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, Pax Christi, Pax Romana and the World Union for Progressive Judaism.

34. As non-governmental organizations in consultative status with the Economic and Social Council, those organizations were gravely concerned over human rights violations in China. Since the massacre of the pro-democracy demonstrators in Beijing the previous June, the Chinese Government had waged a vigorous campaign of repression against persons active in or sympathetic to the pro-democracy movement. Thousands of students, intellectuals, workers and other members of the movement had been arbitrarily arrested and imprisoned; persons accused of "counter-revolutionary" acts or acts against "public security" had been tried, sentenced and executed following summary procedures; many peaceful associations had been declared illegal by the Government and disbanded; and severe censorship had been imposed on the media.

35. The Chinese Government, which had made much of its lifting of martial law in Beijing, continued to arrest, subject to "reform" through labour or persecute thousands of persons because of their political opinions.

36. The serious nature of the human rights violations currently occurring in the People's Republic of China called for a serious response. The non-governmental organizations on whose behalf he was speaking therefore requested the Commission on Human Rights to express its grave concern over the human rights violations in China; to appeal to the Government of the People's Republic of China to stop committing violence against those who peacefully expressed their opinions and arresting and punishing them; to ensure that all those currently detained would be promptly and unconditionally released or charged and tried in accordance with internationally recognized standards; and to appoint a Special Rapporteur to investigate the allegations of human rights abuses in China.

37. Mr. Ditchev (Bulgaria) took the Chair.

38. Mr. RAIANI (International Organization for the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination) made a statement on behalf of his own organization and the following 24 non-governmental organizations: the American Association of Jurists, the Arab Organization for Human Rights, the International Association of Penal Law, the International Association of Educators for World Peace, the International Association for the Defence of Religious Liberty, the International Peace Bureau, Centre Europe - Tiers Monde, the International Commission of Health Professionals for Health and Human Rights, the World Confederation of Labour, Defence for Children International, the International Federation for Human Rights, the International Federation of Rural Adult Catholic Movements, Human Rights Advocates, Human Rights Internet, the International League for the Rights and Liberation of Peoples, the International Fellowship of Reconciliation, Pax Christi, Pax Romana, the Service, Justice and Peace in Latin America, the Anti-Slavery Society, the Arab Lawyers Union, the Union of Arab Jurists, the International Commission of Jurists, and the World Union for Progressive Judaism.

39. Recalling that Eritrea had been federated with Ethiopia in 1950 on the basis of resolution 390 (V) of the United Nations General Assembly, contrary to the principles embodied in the Charter of the United Nations and against the will of the Eritrean people, he condemned the dismantling of all the territory's democratic institutions by the Ethiopian feudal rulers and the unilateral annexation of Eritrea by Ethiopia in 1962.

40. Whilst the United Nations, the author and sole guarantor of the Federation, had remained silent, the Ethiopian rulers had been committing gross violations of human rights: arbitrary arrests, detention, torture, extrajudicial execution, blanket bombardment using napalm, and the destruction of whole villages. That war had forced hundreds of thousands of Eritreans to seek refuge in foreign countries and tens of thousands had been internally displaced. Approximately 2 million Eritreans were currently living on the brink of catastrophe as a result of the combined effects of war and famine.

41. Therefore, the non-governmental organizations on whose behalf he was speaking solemnly appealed to the Commission on Human Rights to remind the United Nations that it had the moral and legal responsibility to use its good offices to find a just and peaceful settlement to the Eritrea-Ethiopia conflict.

42. Mr. ARTEAGA (Venezuela) said that current circumstances throughout the world helped to reinforce multilateral dialogue and strengthen bodies such as the Commission on Human Rights. Indeed, in the final decade of the century, democracy and liberty were making inexorable progress in various regions, and obstacles to the transmission and propagation of ideas had virtually disappeared. As the beneficiary of co-operation from States, non-governmental organizations and individuals, the Commission on Human Rights had a tremendous responsibility that obliged it to keep out of any conflict which might damage its credibility.

43. Study of the violation of human rights and fundamental freedoms in any part of the world aroused particular interest because it was the product of a universal and constructive outlook. That principle of universality did not allow for any selectiveness or discrimination in the treatment of situations brought before the Commission.

44. Venezuela had examined with great interest the report by the Special Rapporteur on Summary or Arbitrary Executions (E/CN.4/1990/22), but regretted the failure to include in that report the supplementary information provided by the Venezuelan Government. As a result, the report reflected a distinct imbalance between the complaints lodged and the information communicated by Venezuela. In any case, the Special Rapporteur was familiar with that information, which was at the disposal of the Commission.

45. By inclination and for historical reasons, Venezuela was a country deeply committed to respecting human rights and reinforcing the mechanisms aimed at protecting these rights. The isolated cases brought to the attention of the Special Rapporteur were certainly very regrettable, but they could not call in question that tradition of systematic respect for and protection of the fundamental rights of each one of the country's inhabitants. The process of consolidating democracy in the Latin American countries, however, was not free of difficulties. Those problems resulted from various factors, including the sacrifices necessary to service the foreign debt, a phenomenon which had been

mentioned by Mr. Türk in his report entitled "Realization of economic, social and cultural rights" (E/CN.4/Sub.2/1989/19). Despite the seriousness of the economic crisis with which they were currently faced, the Latin American countries had shown a willingness to defend the fundamental rights of their population, thus contributing to the reinforcement of the Commission's machinery.

46. Moreover, Venezuela had examined with particular care the reports presented by the Special Rapporteurs or Representatives on the situation of human rights in Chile, El Salvador, Afghanistan and the Islamic Republic of Iran.

47. With regard to the human rights situation in Chile, he had no doubt that the complaints concerning recent violations would be duly clarified by the newly elected Chilean authorities. In that connection, he expressed deep satisfaction at the restoration of democracy in Chile, a country with which Venezuela had close and long-standing ties. As it embarked on a new stage in its history, Chile would undoubtedly be able to count on the support of the international community. As indicated in the conclusions and recommendations of the relevant report, his delegation was therefore of the opinion that it was not necessary to extend the mandate of the Special Rapporteur on Chile.

48. As far as the situation in El Salvador was concerned, Venezuela was alarmed by the seriousness and scale of human rights violations committed against the Salvadorian people, which could be ascribed as much to the army and the security services as to the opposition forces. Nevertheless it was appropriate to bear in mind that, as indicated by the Special Representative when introducing his report, respect for human rights and peaceful dialogue constituted the basis of the policy of the current President, Mr. Alfredo Cristiani. It was regrettable that the persistent armed conflict was jeopardizing the life and integrity of the civilian population and was steadily undermining the country's economic, political and social foundations. The army and the Frente Farabundo Marti para la Liberación Nacional (FMLN) had already concluded several truces, often for humanitarian ends, which showed that they were capable of efforts to promote peace. Venezuela, therefore, made a fresh appeal to the two parties to renew a constructive dialogue which would allow peace and tranquillity to be restored in that country. The Venezuelan Government reaffirmed its readiness to contribute in any way it could to the initiation of that dialogue.

49. Mrs. GONZALEZ MARTINEZ (Mexico) stressed that the rights of the individual and the rights of peoples, in particular the right to self-determination, were inextricably linked and went on to point out that, over the previous 10 years, the deterioration of the situation regarding human rights and fundamental freedoms had frequently been linked to various regional conflicts provoked, for the main part, from outside. Efforts to restore human rights in areas where they had been systematically violated had facilitated peace initiatives and contributed to a reduction of tension. In that connection, her delegation reaffirmed its support for the pacification efforts in Central America.

50. As the Secretary-General's Special Representative for El Salvador, Mr. Pastor Ridruejo, stressed in his report, the civilian population of El Salvador had suffered tremendously from the conflict which divided the country and, in particular, from the indiscriminate shelling of densely

populated areas. Her delegation called for human rights and the rules of international humanitarian law applicable to armed conflicts to be respected in all circumstances in El Salvador, and once again appealed to the Government of that country and the FMLN to resume talks, in order to put an end to a conflict which was a severe trial for the Salvadorian people and a threat to the peace process in Central America.

51. Her delegation deeply regretted the armed clashes which had taken place in Chalaltenango during the resettlement of refugees and supported the recent appeal by the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees for observance of the principles to which the countries of Central America had subscribed in the declaration adopted at the 1989 International Conference on Refugees in Central America.

52. With regard to Chile, she stated that, since the military coup d'état, the Mexican Government and people had consistently joined forces with the international community in order to restore human rights and fundamental freedoms in that country. As the Special Rapporteur, Mr. Fernando Volio, had indicated in his report, the democratically elected civilian Government would have much to do in order to erase the after-effects of 16 years of military rule. Her delegation warmly welcomed the new Government's undertaking to reintegrate Chile into the international human rights system set up by the United Nations.

53. She expressed concern over the human rights situation in Iran and, in particular, over the politically motivated executions and detention conditions referred to in the report by the Special Representative, Mr. Galindo Pohl. Her delegation sincerely hoped that Mr. Pohl would be given sufficient means to continue his mission.

54. With regard to Afghanistan, she associated herself with the Special Representative in welcoming the withdrawal of foreign troops, but condemned the continuation of the war between governmental forces and opposition movements. As was indicated by the Special Representative in his report, only a negotiated political settlement putting an end to arms deliveries by foreign countries and involving all the parties concerned would permit the restoration of peace and the return of the refugees.

55. Respect for the independence and territorial integrity of Cyprus and for the various resolutions adopted by the Commission on Human Rights and the Security Council, as well as a display of political will by all the parties concerned to find a fair and lasting solution to the problem with the help of the Secretary-General of the United Nations, were prerequisites for the restoration of fundamental freedoms and rights for all Cypriots.

56. Her delegation reasserted its firm commitment to the sovereignty and territorial integrity of Lebanon, and declared that it was concerned by the human rights violations affecting the inhabitants of certain villages in the south of the country. Humanitarian organizations should be able to have access to persons detained in southern Lebanon, in line with the resolutions adopted by the Commission.

57. Her delegation hoped that, following the upheavals in Romania, the human rights instruments would no longer be a dead letter in that country. It expressed satisfaction that the Special Rapporteur had been able to visit Romania, and would examine with great interest his conclusions on the development of the human rights situation there.

58. She expressed concern regarding the human rights situation in China, as described in the note by the Secretary-General (E/CN.4/1990/52), and hoped that the Chinese authorities would take the necessary measures to remedy the situation.

59. Lastly, she said she was confident that the Commission would not allow political and ideological disputes which were irrelevant to its mandate to influence the examination of cases which were put before it. She was sure that the Commission would serve the cause of human rights and fundamental freedoms in a collegial and universal fashion, and in a spirit of objectivity and impartiality.

60. Ms. ANDREYCHUCK (Canada) said that Canada was following the changes which were currently taking place throughout the world with particular interest and attention as Canada was made up of persons who came from a wide variety of countries. Canada believed that there must be full adherence by all States to the provisions of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted by the United Nations more than 40 years previously, as well as to all the other international instruments to which they were party. For that reason, Canada was concerned by the attitude of some Governments which maintained that efforts to denounce activities violating universal human rights standards constituted interference in their internal affairs. However, the very existence of the Commission, and the debate under agenda item 12, clearly demonstrated that such assertions were not in keeping with current international realities.

61. No one could deny that a gulf still existed between principle and practice in the area of human rights. Even today, many minority groups were the victims of persecution; their rights were being denied and their very existence threatened. That was why Canada supported the proposal by the Yugoslav Government to draw up a declaration on the rights of populations belonging to national, ethnic, religious or linguistic minorities, and was in favour of establishing a working group of the Commission which would be responsible for formulating international standards for the protection of minority rights. The activities of the Special Rapporteurs, Special Representatives and working groups of the Commission had gone some way towards bridging that gap, but the success of that work ultimately depended upon the co-operation of the incriminated States. In that connection, her delegation stressed the need to uphold the principle of inviolability of witnesses and other individuals or groups that co-operated with the Rapporteurs and working groups, as that precept was central to the very credibility of the Commission.

62. In some States, human rights violations had become endemic. Such was the case in the Islamic Republic of Iran, where summary arrests, torture and arbitrary executions were continuing. Her delegation eagerly awaited the report by the Special Representative of the Commission on his visit to Iran. While his visit to Iran was to be welcomed, the fate of the witnesses who had appeared before him was a matter of concern to the Canadian Government.

63. Her delegation urged the Government of Iraq to respond to the accusations made against it, and to take the necessary measures to put an end to the involuntary uprooting of populations and disregard for due process in dealing with prisoners detained for alleged security violations. Likewise, in Syria, where serious human rights violations had been noted, the Government should ensure practical respect for the principles of due process and protection of the rights of the accused.

64. Unfortunately, despite the withdrawal of Soviet troops, the conflict in Afghanistan between the Najibullah régime and the opposition forces was continuing. Canada believed that it was only through negotiation and dialogue between the opposing forces that the issue could be resolved, and therefore urged all foreign Powers, in particular the Soviet Union, to encourage compromise and national reconciliation with a view to forming a non-aligned, representative government and establishing a durable peace in Afghanistan.

65. The campaign of repression which had been conducted in China since June 1989 had been accompanied by gross human rights violations, in particular the right to a fair trial. The lifting of martial law in Beijing had not served to significantly alleviate the situation. All persons arrested since June 1989 should be released, further arrests should be ended, and martial law should be lifted in Tibet, where any attempt to evaluate the human rights situation was rendered particularly difficult by the continuing refusal of the Chinese authorities to allow diplomatic personnel into the region. Her delegation strongly encouraged the Chinese Government to take action so that the progress made over the previous decade in the sphere of human rights in China might once again become a reality.

66. While welcoming the Union of Myanmar's stated commitment to hold free and fair elections on 27 May 1990, Canada remained disturbed by the absence of positive measures, such as the lifting of martial law, which would confirm that a democratic process was being pursued in that country. Developments in the situation during the coming months would have a direct impact on relations between Canada and the Union of Myanmar.

67. Canada also deplored the continued violence in Sri Lanka and the failure of the Sri Lankan Government to react to it. The repeal of several emergency regulations, including the 55FF Regulation, had undoubtedly helped to improve the situation, but her delegation called upon the Sri Lankan Government to ensure the protection of civilians. Likewise in Nepal, where violent incidents had taken place recently, the Government and opposition representatives should initiate a political dialogue in order to try and resolve the problems which had led to that violence.

68. In the face of the suffering endured by millions of people in certain countries in the Horn of Africa, in particular the Sudan, Ethiopia and Somalia, as a result of bloody internal conflicts and severe famines, the international community had to react and appeal to the parties involved to declare a cease-fire and enter into negotiations in order to find a fair and just solution to their disputes. Peace constituted a prerequisite to the full enjoyment of rights and freedoms by the inhabitants of that region. However, peace in itself was but a first step towards respect for those rights and freedoms, and the Governments of the countries concerned had to understand that support for their economic development would be dependent upon the progress they made in the human rights field.

69. In Haiti the situation had unfortunately worsened, and, while welcoming the amnesty proclaimed by General Avril on 7 February, Canada was not yet convinced that a genuinely democratic process had been initiated in that country. Therefore, the Commission should follow developments in the situation in Haiti very closely, and Canada would support a balanced resolution on that question, and would look favourably upon the appointment of a Special Rapporteur for Haiti.

70. With regard to Cuba, her delegation expressed concern that the Cuban Government had allegedly taken reprisals against several witnesses who had testified before a visiting mission from the Commission on Human Rights in 1988, and was disturbed by reports of violations of prisoners' rights and of the right of Cuban citizens to leave the country.

71. Canada welcomed the appointment of a new human rights procurator in Guatemala, but remained concerned by the violence against students, peasants, members of human rights organizations and trade unionists. Her delegation sincerely hoped that the recently opened investigations into the murders of Hector Oqueli and Gilda Flores, and into the Aguacate massacre, would be brought to a successful conclusion.

72. In El Salvador, despite a marginal improvement in the situation, arrests, detentions and torture had continued, as had acts of violence by insurgent forces. The decision to prosecute persons suspected of the assassination of certain members of the Jesuit community was an encouraging sign, as were the recent efforts to revive negotiations in El Salvador, using the good offices of the Secretary-General, in order to reach a negotiated settlement of that country's internal conflict. However, it was essential for the Government of El Salvador to protect the life and physical integrity of all its citizens.

73. Her delegation regretted that the Albanian authorities had not seen fit to co-operate with the efforts of the Commission on Human Rights to examine the situation in that country, and urged them to reconsider their position.

74. Although there was much to be discouraged about, the changes which had occurred in a number of countries held out hope. Namibia, for example, which would soon be independent, had adopted a Constitution which was exemplary from a human rights point of view, and demonstrated the feasibility of fundamental change through a peaceful, democratic and negotiated process. Recent developments in South Africa, in particular the legalization of political parties and the release of Nelson Mandela, raised hopes that the system of apartheid would soon disappear once and for all. However, there was still a long way to go towards that objective. Negotiations could begin only once the state of emergency had been completely lifted and all political prisoners had been released. Meanwhile, the international community should maintain pressure in the form of economic sanctions on the South African Government, until there was clear evidence of irreversible change.

75. According to some reports, human rights violations were still being committed in certain parts of Zaire. Consequently, Canada encouraged the Government of Zaire to redouble its efforts to consolidate the progress which had already been made in regard to respect for human rights and looked forward to the completion of an institutional co-operation project, which had been started in September 1989.

76. Canada also welcomed the efforts on the part of the Indonesian Government to improve economic and social conditions in East Timor, but nevertheless urged it to ensure that human rights in that territory were fully respected.

77. Her delegation congratulated Chile on its return to democracy, and welcomed the new Government's pledge to create a climate conducive to the protection of human rights in that country. It also congratulated the new Government of Paraguay on the various measures it had adopted, which had contributed to a dramatic improvement in the human rights situation in that country. Nevertheless, inequitable access to land remained a barrier to the exercise of human rights in rural areas, and it was to be hoped that the Government of Paraguay would take vigorous measures to implement its land reform programme.

78. Canada had observed the changes in Eastern Europe with great satisfaction. Particularly welcome had been the end of the repression of civil and political rights, as well as economic, social and cultural rights, which had characterized the Ceausescu régime in Romania, and Canada encouraged that country's provisional Government to continue its efforts to restore full rights to the Romanian people, including minority groups. Canada was also pleased that the Government of Bulgaria had adopted a new policy with regard to the Turkish minority in Bulgaria, and urged it to continue to safeguard the identity and guarantee the rights of that minority. Canada looked forward to the application, through the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe, of higher standards of behaviour in human rights matters in Europe, including the right to free elections and representative institutions. Finally, the process of democratization and openness which was under way in the USSR held out hope that the many positive changes which had taken place in the field of human rights in that country would be followed by further beneficial developments.

79. In conclusion, her delegation restated its belief that the international community must continue to defend its objectives and remain vigilant, in order to remove any obstacles which threatened their achievement. It should never be forgotten that it was the children of the future who would benefit from the international community's accomplishments, as every generation was obliged to build upon the foundations laid by the preceding generation.

80. Ms. BOZHKOVA (Bulgaria) said that, given the improved international climate and the promising democratic changes in Europe and other parts of the world, it would be appropriate to approach agenda item 12 from a different viewpoint reflecting the new realities in the world and the new relations which existed between States. Confrontation based on the ideologization and politicization of human rights had given way to constructive and productive dialogue and goodwill. Consequently, it had been possible to find political solutions to long-standing and complicated conflicts which had adversely affected the enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms. The settlement of the conflict in Afghanistan and Namibia, and the emerging prospects of finding a peaceful solution to the problem of Cambodia and of dismantling apartheid through negotiation, bore witness to that new readiness by States to co-operate in order to promote and protect human rights in the interdependent and indivisible world of today.

81. While confrontation, condemnation or categorical rejection were no longer acceptable attitudes, the Commission could not afford to ignore human rights violations, wherever they occurred. On the contrary, the Commission was obliged to find the most effective way of eliminating human rights violations in general, and in specific countries in particular, without applying selective criteria. Furthermore, the Commission had to take into account the fact that the reasons for systematic violations of human rights varied according to the country in which they occurred, and that the situation in the countries concerned could not be improved overnight. At the same time, the Commission had a duty to help those Governments which were making efforts to remedy the situation. In Chile, for example, as the Special Rapporteur on the question of human rights in Chile, Mr. Volio Jiménez, stated in paragraph 28 of his report (E/CN.4/1990/5), after many long years of dictatorship, "much remains to be done to ensure that Chilean society enjoys a reliable system of legal protection for freedom". The Bulgarian delegation welcomed the installation of a representative democracy in that country, and wished the new Government and the people of Chile every success.

82. In some cases, human rights violations were the result of foreign occupation, which was a matter of grave concern to the international community. In that connection, her delegation expressed regret at the tragic plight of the Palestinian people, and reaffirmed its support for their just and legitimate cause. It also attached great importance to solving the human rights problems which existed in Cyprus as a result of the continuing foreign occupation of 37 per cent of the territory of that country and reiterated the urgent need to find a viable and lasting solution to the conflict which would safeguard the sovereignty, unity, territorial integrity and non-alignment of Cyprus, as well as the restoration of the rights of the Cypriot people.

83. In other cases, even though conflicts had been resolved, human rights violations were continuing as a result of non-observance and non-implementation of agreements. A case in point was Afghanistan, which was currently prey to a fraternal war because the parties involved had not respected the Geneva agreements. The Bulgarian delegation urged all parties to implement these agreements strictly, in order to put an end to the bloodshed and restore peace within Afghanistan.

84. Moreover, her delegation could not but mention the deplorable situation of human rights in South Africa as a consequence of the policy of apartheid. It sincerely hoped that recent events in that part of the world, in particular the release of Nelson Mandela, would lead to the dismantling of the anachronistic system of apartheid, and thus open the way to the effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms by the whole of the South African population.

85. If it was true that the Commission should avoid acting like a court, it was also true that the Governments of the countries concerned should not regard constructive criticisms or actions on the part of the Commission as a kind of sentence. In other words, those who criticized and those who were criticized should trust each other. For that reason, her delegation attached great importance to the thematic studies requested by the Commission, and to the examination, within a given theme, of specific cases. In that connection, it welcomed the report prepared by the Commission's Special Rapporteur on summary or arbitrary executions (E/CN.4/1990/22) and on his visit to Colombia at the invitation of the Colombian Government (E/CN.4/1990/22/Add.1). She

expressed the hope that the other countries mentioned in the report would follow the example of the Colombian Government, and that the odious phenomenon of summary and arbitrary executions would finally disappear in all parts of the world. Those thematic studies were extremely constructive, and should be strengthened and developed. The Commission's standard-setting activities also played a major role in promoting and protecting human rights and eliminating human rights violations. Those activities provided a very good basis for inter-State co-operation, and contributed to the enhancement and development of domestic legislation, as well as the improvement of the human rights situation in all countries.

86. Major democratic changes had also taken place in Bulgaria in all spheres, including that of human rights. Of course, there was still much to be done in order to achieve the ultimate aim of a democratic, law-governed society which provided adequate guarantees against possible human rights violations. However, thanks to a series of new measures which had been introduced since 10 November 1989, all Bulgarian citizens would soon be able to exercise universally recognized human rights and fundamental freedoms fully and effectively. The Government of Bulgaria had also undertaken to correct certain errors of the past. Consequently, the rights of Turkish-speaking Bulgarians had been restored, and the relevant declaration, drawn up by the main political forces of the country, had been adopted unanimously by the Bulgarian Parliament. Bulgarian society as a whole would contribute to the process of national reconciliation through dialogue. The Bulgarian Parliament and the Bulgarian Government had undertaken to act quickly in order to bring domestic legislation into line with Bulgaria's international obligations in the field of human rights, and with the relevant clauses of the concluding document of the Vienna meeting of representatives of the participating States of the Conference on Security and Co-operation in Europe.

87. Finally, her delegation reaffirmed its commitment to the universal, full and effective enjoyment of human rights and fundamental freedoms, as well as to the elimination of human rights violations in all parts of the world.

88. Mrs. Quisumbing (Philippines) resumed the Chair.

89. Mr. STRASSERA (Argentina), referring to the situation in Cyprus, expressed his delegation's support for the good-offices mission of the Secretary-General aimed at ensuring the implementation of relevant United Nations resolutions, in particular General Assembly resolution 37/253 calling for the withdrawal of occupying forces. Argentina also hoped that refugees would be able to return to their homelands in complete security, that the freedom of movement and property rights of all Cypriots would be respected, and that the fate of missing persons would be clarified. Furthermore, Turkish settlers on the island should withdraw. Naturally, Argentina joined the Security Council in condemning any attempt to secede.

90. Referring to the Secretary-General's report on Cyprus (E/CN.4/1990/21), the Argentine delegation was optimistic regarding prospects for negotiations between the two communities, and was sure that their leaders would heed the appeal for reconciliation made by the Security Council on 14 December 1989. He paid a tribute to the United Nations Peace-Keeping Force in Cyprus for its efforts on behalf of Greek Cypriots living in the northern part of the island and Turkish Cypriots living in the southern part. Finally, he expressed the hope that the improved international climate would facilitate the search for a definitive solution in Cyprus.

91. Mr. GUOXIANG (China) reminded the Commission that, following the adoption by the Sub-Commission on Prevention of Discrimination and Protection of Minorities, in an abnormal voting procedure, of a resolution on the way in which the Chinese Government had quelled the rebellion in Beijing, he personally had sent a letter to the Secretary-General of the United Nations conveying his Government's position. The Chinese Ambassador in New York had also sent a letter to the Secretary-General solemnly rejecting that resolution and any action which might be taken pursuant to it. That letter had given a detailed account of the events in Beijing and of the action taken by the Chinese Government. Unfortunately, the Secretary-General's note (E/CN.4/1990/52), which was before the Commission at its current session, was accompanied by annexes containing groundless and libellous information supplied by three non-governmental organizations. The Chinese Government wished to express its indignation and regretted the fact that the situation in China had been described with a total disregard for the facts.

92. The information concerned was said to have been obtained from "reliable sources", "eye witnesses", and "tourists", in particular. Its authors sought to accuse the Chinese Government of suppressing peaceful demonstrations by force. In fact, when confronted by the demonstrations which had taken place in Beijing between mid-April and 2 June 1989, the Chinese Government had done everyting possible to find a solution through persuasion. Even after the violation of martial law on 20 May, the Government had not resorted to force. On the contrary, it had sent over 100 ambulances and several hundred doctors and nurses to the aid of the students, who had gone on hunger strike.

93. While it is true that on 4 June the Chinese Government had indeed used force, that had been due to attempts by the rioters to overthrow the socialist system through violence. What had started as demonstrations and hunger strikes had evolved into outright rebellion, which had inflicted heavy material losses and casualties on the forces of law and order. In such conditions, a Government had no choice but to ensure the maintenance of public order and the security of its citizens.

94. Following an investigation, the Chinese Government had confirmed that the violence had resulted in around 300 deaths. According to the information contained in the annexes to the Secretary-General's note, there had been a blood-bath on 4 June, young girls had been crushed by tanks, etc. However, no proof of those accusations had since been provided. On the contrary, a composer from Taiwan, Mr. Hou Dejian, who had been present during the evacuation of Tienanmen Square, had stated: "I did not see any student, resident or soldier being killed, nor did I see tanks or armoured personnel carriers rolling over the crowd". Another witness who had been at the scene, Mr. Gao Xin, had affirmed: "I did not see soldiers shooting into the crowd ... . It is certain that no one died during the clearing of the square". A number of students who had been present at the scene had made similar declarations. In one of the annexes concerned, one Xiao Bin had been quoted as an "eyewitness". He had told a Western television correspondent that on 4 June he had seen with his own eyes 20,000 people killed by the army in Tienanmen Square; however, that person had later confessed before a court that he had been lying. Those were the kind of witnesses that had been quoted by the Western media and certain human rights groups.

95. The accusers had also spoken of arbitrary arrests and summary executions. In fact, the only people to have been punished, apart from the organizers of the rebellion, were elements who had committed serious crimes: beatings, looting, arson and murder. They had been tried strictly in accordance with legal procedures. The Chinese Government had even shown leniency towards those who had repented.

96. The measures taken by China to quell the rebellion, protect the interests of its people and ensure the development of the country and the success of the reform process had been within its sovereignty. It was therefore regrettable that certain Western countries, not content with making unfounded allegations, had gone so far as to apply sanctions in order to exert pressure on China and help individuals who were plotting to overthrow the legitimate Government of the country. Since the beginning of the Commission's session, the representatives of those States had continued to make slanderous accusations. The Chinese Government deplored that kind of interference. China did not seek to impose its will and its values on others. On the contrary, it remained willing to develop relations and friendly co-operation with all countries on the basis of the five principles of peaceful coexistence. China would continue to follow the policy of reform and democratization which had been introduced over a decade previously, in order to make China a highly developed socialist and democratic country. Today, stability had returned to the country, and martial law, which had been imposed in some parts of Beijing, had been lifted on 11 January 1990.

97. Therefore, the Chinese delegation categorically rejected the resolution on "the situation in China" which had been adopted by the Sub-Commission; it would be still less advisable for the Commission to draw up a further resolution on the basis of that text and the unfounded allegations in the annexes to document E/CN.4/1990/52.

98. The CHAIRMAN invited those delegations wishing to do so, to exercise their right of reply under item 12.

99. Mr. MARKIDES (Cyprus) said that the observer for Turkey had tried to divert the Commission's attention from the gross violations of human rights perpetrated by his country against the people of Cyprus. He had ignored the verdict of the international community which had condemned Turkey's actions, particularly in resolutions of the United Nations General Assembly and the Security Council, decisions of the Non-Aligned Movement and of the Commonwealth countries, resolutions of the Commission on Human Rights and reports of the Commission of Human Rights of the Council of Europe. Those texts contained details of the violations committed by Turkey: the displacement of 200,000 Greek Cypriots, mass murders, disappearances, the breaking up of Greek Cypriot families, the destruction of property, and discrimination against Greek Cypriots in the occupied zone.

100. The observer for Turkey had spoken of "two peoples" in Cyprus, each of which had the right to separate self-determination. In fact, Cyprus was a single people, composed of a Greek community which constituted 82 per cent of the population, and a Turkish community which made up 18 per cent of the population. It was worth remembering that the purported secession recognized only by Turkey, had been repeatedly condemned by the international community, and in particular by the Security Council in its resolutions 541 (1983) and 550 (1984). The observer for Turkey had hoped that the fact that his

country had invaded Cyprus in 1974, and was continuing its military occupation of almost 40 per cent of Cypriot territory, would be ignored. Turkey had also expelled around 80 per cent of the population from the occupied zone, in an effort to illegally change the demographic balance. In that connection, he referred to an article in the Turkish Cypriot newspaper, Yeniduzen of 14 February 1990, which had said that the unofficial results of the census carried out in January were alarming and showed that "the settlers and the Turkish Cypriots are equal in numbers: 80,000 settlers, and 80,000 Turkish Cypriots. The rulers attempted to keep secret the ... shocking facts concerning the immigration of Turkish Cypriots".

101. As early as 10 June 1965, the Secretary-General of the United Nations had stated in his report (S/6426) that "the Turkish Cypriot leadership is committed to physical and geographical separation of the communities as a political goal ... the result has been a seemingly deliberate policy of self-segregation by the Turkish Cypriots". Turkey still adhered to that policy, as had been demonstrated recently, for example, by the refusal to allow 25 Turkish Cypriot doctors to participate in a medical symposium in Limassol.

102. He hoped that the Commission would hold a debate based exclusively on humanitarian criteria, with a view to promoting the human rights of the people of Cyprus. Such a debate would in no way damage the good offices exercised by the United Nations Secretary-General to induce the parties to return to the negotiating table.

103. Mrs. OSODE (Observer for Liberia) expressed regret at the remarks made by the representative of the International Movement for Fraternal Union among Races and Peoples, about Liberia and its President on Friday, 23 February 1990. Of course, it was very important that members of the Commission and the non-governmental organizations should denounce human rights violations, but only if the accusations made were true. However, the representative in question had used a cynical and disparaging tone against Liberia and its President, Mr. Samuel Kanyon Doe, who had been referred to as "the master sergeant".

104. Under the leadership of President Doe, Liberia had made visible progress in matters of human rights. The problems which remained were largely the result of economic difficulties. Today, however, increased confidence in the Liberian economy was reflected by the establishment of new businesses, and the improvement in relations between Liberia and foreign donors and international financial institutions such as the IMF, the World Bank and the African Development Bank. Moreover, President Doe's Government followed a policy of reconciliation; it had appointed opposition members to key positions in government, and consulted leaders of the opposition on the best means of achieving national development goals.

105. It was outrageous to claim that Liberia had been under "State terrorism" since 1980. On the contrary, that country had returned to constitutional democracy on 6 January 1986, with the election of Samuel Kanyon Doe as President of the Republic. The majority of Liberians living abroad had returned, and lived in the country without oppression. She added that the claim that President Doe had won the elections with an unlikely majority of 99.99 per cent of the votes was altogether inaccurate: in fact he had obtained 51 per cent of the votes. The validity of the elections had been recognized by observers and foreign journalists.

106. A further allegation that a state of war had been declared in the wake of a confrontation in Nimba, on 24 December 1989, was absurd. The truth was that certain dissidents had taken advantage of the festive mood to enter the region from a neighbouring country. Those individuals, who had sought to overthrow the Government, had attacked soldiers on the border, with resultant casualties, and burned down a customs house. Obviously, the Government had been obliged to intervene; the ensuing clashes had claimed victims among the civilian population, and thousands of others had fled to neighbouring countries to seek refuge. Given the seriousness of the situation, the Liberian Government had asked several United Nations bodies to conduct an on-the-spot investigation; their reports would be submitted in due course. Today, calm had returned to the region.

The meeting rose at 6.10 p.m.